

Here is the end of A Georgia Shakespeare

Continued from page 4

looking him full in the face. Her lips trembled a little; but the tone of her voice was strong and level.

"Lancaster, you broke my heart once, and nearly ruined my life. You shall not destroy my grandson's happiness!"

"Why, Bettie—"

"He loves Nettie, and he was brave enough to come straight to you. You insulted him—my boy—in your own house!"

"Send him back. I'll apologize—"

"You loved me once; but you were not brave enough to face my father."

Grandmother laid her little white hand lightly on his shoulder. "Lancaster," she said, her voice full of tenderness, "you owe it to me that I should not ask for anything at your hands twice. What does the foolish quarrel of two old men amount to beside the beautiful love of a boy and girl for each other? Let them be! I want Nettie for my daughter; and I want you for my friend!"

Well, a marble statue would have topped over before that appeal.

The Major choked. "Your most obedient!" he said,—it was his favorite expression,—and sat down. "Anything else, Bettie? It's your day!"

Grandmother smiled down on him. "That is all, except you are to go back with me now and offer your hand to my husband—"

"What? What?"

"My husband, deep down in his heart, really admires you. It crops out in little things. When he speaks of Chancellorsville he always refers to the splendid way you led your battalion."

The Major's smile was grim.

Then in a low, sweet voice grandmother added, "For the sake of the past!"

WHEN grandfather, tall, dignified, and acrid, saw grandmother enter his library with his old enemy, he rose and took off his glasses. Carefully wiping and replacing them, he studied the captive with chin thrust forward much as one would study a new and curious species.

"Colonel," said the Major, "your grandson has called on me to ask in marriage the hand of my granddaughter."

"Did you kick him out?" asked grandfather biting.

"No, he smothered me with his immense dignity. I have been thinking over the

matter since he left and regret to say that I am afraid I was not so cordial as I should have been. Colonel, we are both old men, each with a foot in the grave—"

"You should have two there!"

The Major's neck began to swell.

"Doubtless!" he said after a masterful effort. "But what I was going to add is that nothing stands in the way of the happiness of these two young people but two old fools; and if it's any comfort to you I don't mind saying that when it comes to being a fool, there is no room on the mat for anybody but Lancaster Witherspoon!"

"Since you put it that way, Major," said grandfather, with his crooked smile, "I have a chance to agree with you for the first time in my life. But as to the other matter, it is quite impossible—"

"Wait!" said grandmother sternly. "You shall not say it! I called on Major Witherspoon this morning and made a personal appeal to him. Do you desire to repudiate me?" Grandmother was several inches taller than I had ever seen her.

"No!" said grandfather, after a moment of reflection. "Major, your hand! I assume all the blame for our long misunderstanding, and tender you my full apologies!"

The Major sobbed and turned away suddenly. "Sir, your—most obedient!"

LATER, when Nettie and I were walking in the garden, we heard sly Shakespeare overhead, practising the songs we had given him to learn.

"I knew all about your teaching him that song," said Nettie, "and I saw you set him free."

"Ah!" I began to understand.

"Yes, and I put out a cage for him, knowing he would be half starved. He came in willingly after a few days of freedom."

"And you loved me even then? Your face—when you graduated—"

"Phil, don't you ever believe a woman's face! The oldest fib in the world is the look on a woman's face when the man who loves her tells her so. Love you? I loved you, Phil, when we were barefoot children, I loved you when we were in the old academy. My poor Phil, you have been doomed from the beginning of my life, and the only freedom you have ever had was bound up in the years you waited for my coming!"

Here is the rest of In the Room Across from His

Continued from page 7

effectually to mop his eyes with his well arm. Letitia was standing at the door.

"I heard you moaning," she said, "and I thought perhaps you were in pain."

A passion for truth suddenly filled Charles Henry's soul. "No," he said, "I wasn't moaning, and I wasn't in pain. I've just been reading that," indicating Parkinson's Magazine, "and you're right. I'm nothing but a bundle of sentiment, without even common sense to hold me together. I see everything through colored spectacles, and I can't tell the truth, to save me. I wasn't moaning just now. I was doing the baby act, because I'm not even man enough to keep my troubles to myself."

Letitia suddenly stepped into the room. "Wait!" she said, breathless. "Wait! I was wrong. I didn't know it then; but I was. You're the one who's right." She suddenly picked up Parkinson's and flung it to the floor beneath her feet. "Do you suppose I really meant that stuff?" she asked scornfully. "Why, you're the right one! You saw the truth where I was only looking on the surface. You knew things about me that I didn't even know myself. I thought I liked to be plain and screw

my hair back and wear spectacles, when it was only because people thought I ought." Suddenly her cheeks grew very pink. "Do you know what I was doing when I heard you in here?"

"No," said Charles Henry. "What?" Letitia lowered her voice to impart a great and terrible secret. "I—I was going to curl my hair!" she said. And Charles Henry, reaching with his well arm, grabbed one of her braids.

"If you dare!" he threatened. "If you dare! I want you just as you are, spectacles and all!"

And Letitia Smith, Ph. D., dissolved in tears upon his well shoulder.

It was some time after this that she made a startling discovery. Gradually she became aware that her subconscious mind was standing aloof, watching the whole performance, and, with well trained regularity, docketing her emotions for future reference. A little shamefaced, she turned upon Charles Henry.

"What—what are you thinking about?" she asked. And out of the midst of a great abstraction he answered her absently.

"I was thinking what a bully story this would make," said Charles Henry.

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